

II. Remarks

Claims 3, 5-8, 10-23 and 25-41 are pending and rejected. By this paper, claims 16, 18, and 26 have been amended and claims 3, 5-8, 10-15, 17, 19-23, 25, and 27-41 have been canceled. With the amendments and remarks provided herewith, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of all rejections.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thankfully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of the allowability of claims 17, 19, and 36 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, responsive to the objections to claims 17, 19, and 36, each of claims 17, 19, and 36 has been canceled and their respective base claims 16, 18, and 26 have been amended to include the limitations thereof. Thus, these claims are in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103

Responsive to the rejections of claims 3, 16, 25, 28-35, 37, 38 and 41 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,222,949 to Kaldany ("Kaldany") in view of U.S. Pat. No. 5,998,551 to O'Neil et al. ("O'Neil"), claim 16 has been amended to include the allowable subject matter of former claim 17 and claims 3, 25, 28-35, 37, 38 and 41 have been canceled. Therefore, these rejections have been rendered moot.

Responsive to the rejections of claims 5-15, 18, 20, 22, 23, 26, 39 and 40 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Kaldany* in view of *O'Neil* and further in view of any one of U.S. Patent No. 5,998,551 to Wang et al. ("Wang"), U.S. Patent No. 5,088,991 to Weldon ("Weldon"), U.S. Patent No. 4,156,538 to Roberts ("Roberts"), U.S. Patent No. 5,234,416 to Macaulay et al. ("Macaulay"), U.S. Patent No. 5,310,779 to Lai ("Lai"), U.S. Patent No. 4,436,887 to Chromecek et al. ("Chromecek"), claims 18 and 26 have been amended to include the allowable subject matter of former claims 19 and 36, respectively, and claims 5-15, 20, 22, 23, 39 and 40 have been canceled. Therefore, these rejections have been rendered moot.

Conclusion

Thus, the Applicants believe that claims 16, 18, and 26 are in a condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date

/Katie B. Goedertier/
Katie B. Goedertier (Reg. No. 63,409)